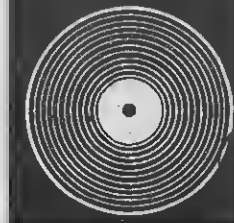


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record research

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courtesy of Irwin Goen



RECORD RESEARCH

THE MAGAZINE OF RECORD STATISTICS AND INFORMATION

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STAFF AND ASSOCIATES AT A RECENT 'SYNDICATE' MEETING
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From left to right PHOTO COURTESY OF BOB COLTON
Bottom Row: BJORN ENGLUND (Guest from Sweden), LEN
KUNSTADT, PAUL SHEATSLEY, WALTER C. ALLEN, MIKE LBPAT.
Top Row: HARRISON SMITH, CARL KENDZIORA, PERRY ANAGNIAC,
ANTHONY ROTANTE and HAROLD FLAKSER.

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31.

Regarding RECORD RESEARCH BULLETIN:

Our last issue was No. 12 (no longer available). Issue 13 is
in the preparation stage and will be dispatched when com-
pleted to all our active subscribers.



VICTORIA SPIVEY

"MY FIRST CHECK WAS FOR \$5000... THEY COULDN'T PRESS THE RECORD FAST ENOUGH AS THE DEMAND WAS SO HEAVY. I RECALL WALKING AROUND ST. LOUIS AND EVERY PLACE I HEARD MYSELF MOANING. I COULD SEE THOSE SNAKES FLYING AS THEY USED SO MUCH PUBLICITY... FLYSHEETS, ADVERTISEMENTS, THROW-AWAYS AND ALL TYPES OF DISPLAYS..."

These were 'the sweet smell of success' remarks of a nerry youngster fresh from Texas who broke in big with a blues-record hit, her own BLACK SNAKE BLUES, on her very first try. Miss Spivey reasons that she introduced something different into her blues, a bouncing rhythmic quality that really caught on, and it is very much akin to what they're doing in rhythm and blues today.

Victoria Spivey came into prominence during that wonderful golden age of blues-singing which boasted such stars as Bessie, Clara and Mamie Smith, Ma Rainey, Ida Cox and so many others. She loved Bessie's Gulf Coast Blues, Clara's Prescription For The Blues, Mamie's Crazy Blues, Ma Rainey's Boll Weevil Blues and Ida Cox's Moanin' Groanin' Blues. In fact they're in her blues repertoire today, along with many of her own compositions. Miss Spivey made many recordings for such companies as Okeh, Victor, Vocalion and Decca. She had stellar jazz accompaniments consisting of individual stars like Henry 'Red' Allen, Louis Armstrong, Lee Collins, Lonnie Johnson, Eddie Lang, King Oliver and Omer

Simeon just to name a few. Basically Miss Spivey's own compositions, many of which were recorded, consisted of an earthiness so much a part of our blues heritage. She wove such subjects as illness, infidelity, unrequited love, spiced with sardonic humor into her blues lyrics and drove them home convincingly to her listening public. The melodic content all seem to branch from her moaning Black Snake Blues.

In 1929 she won further laurels with her performance as the ingenue in the first all-Negro full feature movie talkie, HALLELUJAH. Soon after this success she became an orchestra leader touring with a great hot band called Hunter's Serenaders. In the years to follow Victoria Spivey traveled wide and far on many circuits playing first line theatres and nightclubs. She was in Olsen & Johnson's 'Hellzapoppin'. She played the Apollo Theatre and Small's Paradise here in New York City with her late husband, Billy Adams. She made many radio appearances and was the subject of much newspaper publicity.

In the last few years Miss Spivey has been in a state of semi-retirement, occasionally venturing out to sing in some of the local jazz nighteries. She was quite active in the church singing in a choir (an unissued test-recording does exist) and performing at the piano. However in the closing months of 1960 she has really become alive and is starting to sing the blues again. She has been seen and heard in a guest spot at JIMMY RYAN's 52nd

Street jazz nightery with such stars as Wild Bill Davison, Sidney DeParis, Tony Parenti, Don Frye and Zutty Singleton welcoming her back to the blues-fold in grand style with some red-hot accompaniment. Recently she traveled out to WALLACE's in Orange New Jersey to hear the fabulous piano wizardry of Don Lambert and it wasn't too long before her presence became known and she was invited to sing. She sang a dozen of her favorite blues accompanied by the versatile Lambert. The listeners went wild. In fact the spirit so begot her due to the encouragement of the Wallace patrons that she sat down next to Don and pounded out some real old-fashioned funky blues piano. She moaned her Black Snake Blues with Lambert playing duo piano by this time. It was certainly a wonderful evening. Miss Spivey also had an early morning guest spot at the CINDERELLA on West 3rd Street in Greenwich Village where the talented guitarist/banjoist, Danny Barker is resident with a small exciting band. There was another guest in the club at this early hour too. He was none other than the popular Jonah Jones, and what a grown trumpet he played behind Miss Spivey's very inspired version of St. Louis Blues.

Victoria Spivey with Billy Faier as guitar accompaniment opened up 1961 at GERDE'S FOLK CITY on West 4th Street in New York City for a 2-week engagement. She featured such blues as

Gulf Coast Blues, Cherry Pickin' Blues, Laughing to Keep From Crying, St. Louis Blues, Jelly Jelly, Black Snake Blues and her delightful eye-raiser, Handy Man.

In addition to her singing activities Victoria Spivey and her manager, Harrison Smith, granted Paul Oliver (while he and his wife were in Brooklyn on their blues research expedition) some fine tape-recorded interviews which we believe will be broadcasted by the British Broadcasting Corporation in Great Britain in the very near future. Recording-wise, Fontana of Great Britain have re-issued four of Miss Spivey's great blues hits; Christmas Morning Blues, Garter Snake Blues, Blood Thirsty Blues and Dope Head Blues on Fontana TFE 17264. At the present time some recording dates are being contemplated for Miss Spivey.

In closing our appreciation we would like to define Victoria Spivey's blues interpretation as basically simple and direct with a strong accentuated rhythmic beat. It's practically unaffected by time. For the student of the blues who dwell in the halls and caves of blues lore and history, Victoria Spivey is almost legendary, yet this legend with a new look at the world is now active again, working at what she can do the best by adding to her own blues story. We will hear more about her.

Len Kunstadt

PS.. (page 3) The issue of RECORD RESEARCH which Miss Spivey is reading is RECORD RESEARCH No. 3 which contained her story and discography.

- Black Snake Blues
- Dirty Woman Blues
- Jelly Bean Blues
- Spider Web Blues
- Hey, Hey St. Louis
- Evil Hearted Me
- Humored & Petted Blues
- Houston Blues
- Steady Grind Blues
- Arkansas Road Blues
- Organ Grinder Blues
- Idle Hour Blues
- New York Blues
- Alligator Pond Went Dry
- Let Me Roam
- Don't Trust Nobody Blues
- Murder In First Degree
- Good Cabbage
- No, Papa No
- Any Kinds' Man
- Grievin' Me
- One Hour Mama
- Blue Valley Blues
- Red Lantern Blues
- Train Number 12

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THE BLACK SNAKE BLUES



Recorded by

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|-------------------|--------------------|
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| Lonnie Johnson | John Erby |
| King Oliver | Fats Waller |
| Clarence Williams | 'Smoke' Jackson |
| 'Daddy Stovepipe' | Lightnin' Hopkins |
| Johnny Wiggs | Doc Evans |
| Martha Copeland | Johnnie Lee Hooker |

Sis Quanders

- My Handy Man
- Jelly Look What You've Done
- Your Worries Ain't Like Mine
- A Good Man Is Hard To Find
- You've Done Lost
Your Good Thing Now
- Tired Saving My Love For You
- Black Cat Blues
- Funny Feathers
- Moanin' The Blues
- Shower'd With The Blues
- Christmas Mornin' Blues
- Haunted By The Blues
- Telephoning The Blues
- Got To Have What It Takes
- Sport Model Mama
- Nebraska Blues
- Garter Snake Blues
- He Wants Too Much
- Detroit Moan
- Furniture Man Blues
- I'll Never Fall In Love Again
- Got The Blues So Bad
- Shake Your Can
- Long Gone Blues
- Harlem Suzie Kue

**Victoria Spivey, Exclusive Okeh Artist, Plays
Leading Role in All-Colored Talkie, "Hallelujah"**

The King Vidor all-colored talking picture, "Hallelujah," opened to unanimously favorable press notices and a receptive public last week. Victoria Spivey, exclusive Okeh recording artist, is a featured member of the cast, giving an excellent interpretation of one of the leading roles.

(August 1929)



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BLANCHE RING

by Paul Charosh

In The New York Times of August 24, 1958, amid news of the Atomic Age in which we live, appeared the following story:

"Blanche Ring is giving up her New York residence and on September 10 is leaving for Beverly Hills, California. There, the popular star of the mauve decade will residewith her brother, Cyril Ring, manager of the House of Murphy, a Hollywood restaurant.

"I am a prize patient of Dr. W. Coda Martin, and intend to take life easy. Nobody realizes I am eighty-seven years old."

Her famous voice was permanently silenced in 1955 as the result of an operation to remove a tumor from her vocal cords, and her eyes, from which cataracts were removed in 1951, can no longer distinguish anything but forms without the aid of a magnifying glass. However, despite her disabilities, newspaper reporters interviewing her in 1957 (when a legal battle with ex-husband Charles Winniger attracted their attention) discovered that her spirit, enthusiasm, and good humor remain intact.

It is unusual for a performer whose career was at its peak fifty years ago and who has been retired for many years to remain in the public eye as has Miss Ring. Blanche Ring, however, was no ordinary performer. Her reviews attest to this, and, if after reading notices from her enraptured critics there still remains doubt, we have her phonograph records to remove it. Her secret? "The Theatre" magazine of April 1914 tells us.

"It was playing several hundred dramatic parts that enabled me to sing songs so that my audiences liked them," said Blanche Ring ... I played Lady Capulet when I was sixteen to Zeffie Tillbury's Juliet ... To be able to 'go out and get them,' as one must in the successful singing of a song, one must first have confidence. That comes only by the playing of many parts. Over-confidence any fool or child may have, but confidence is something different. Confidence is a moderate quality having nothing to do with conceit. It is the result of experience, much and varied, of having found yourself. Playing Lady Capulet was the beginning of a long, severe training that made it possible for me to sing "Why is the Ocean So Near the Shore?" I was an understudy for Miss O'Leary, the then called soubrette. Now she would be an ingenue. As her understudy at the Boston Museum I played about everything. Everything, no matter how crudely I played it, was a step on the way toward song singing. Because it taught me I could. 'Could' doesn't refer to the song singing, but to the power to grip and hold that necessary, terrifying thing out in front, whose approbation would make or mar your future, that held your bread and butter, your rent -- to give or to withhold from you -- in the palm of its kid-gloved hands. That is what playing many parts teaches, mastery, or rather friendly intimacy with your ruling power, the public. You learn to get chummy with it -- with respectful reservations always tinged with a little fear."

"Hereditly helped me, too, for there was my grandfather, who was the stage director at the Boston Museum for thirty years. The fact that I was James R. Ring's granddaughter gave me a chance to get on the old stage and to understudy the fine English comedienne with the Irish name, Miss O'Leary. My grandfather's blood in me helped me to keep the place, I suppose, for it made me like the work. I was very bad in those parts for the first few seasons, but I must have given promise of doing better, for they let me stay on. But every part helped, for it gave me visions of characters and you can't sing a song without that."

"After all those parts and the Juliet venture when we played throughout New England, with Miss Tillbury's mother, the beautiful Lydia Thompson backing the venture, I went into vaudeville. Glad am I that I did, for nothing teaches you to go out among the people, to get right down among them and grip them as that does. That finished my preparatory education"

Indeed Miss Ring's "preparatory education" must have been a thorough one, because she was recognized as being one of the most skillful, and was truly one of the most beloved performers of her time.

The New York Globe, on January 19, 1909, reported,

"'Yip I Adee I Aye!' is the catchline of a song sung by Blanche Ring in 'The Merry Widow and the Devil' travesty which has come back to Weber's Theatre. Miss Ring repeated the song nine times, and the audience joined in the chorus eight times, and it's a safe guess that nearly everybody who was there last night has been trying to get 'Yip I Adee I Aye!' out of his head today, if he has anything else to do but whistle, hum, or sing 'Yip I Adee!'"

Another review of the same year, unidentified as to origin,

"The return of Miss Blanche Ring to vaudeville at the Colonial Theatre this week is the nature of a theatrical event ... Have you ever thought of the really remarkable number of very important songs that have become associated with Miss Ring's name? Well, there is 'The Good Old Summer Time', one of the cyclonic hits of six years ago; and 'The Belle of Avenue A', and 'Bedelia', and 'My Irish Molly O', and 'Waltz Me Around Again Willie'. But wait, there's still a new one to be added to this already impressive list, and it wears the unusual title of 'Yip-I-Addy-I-Ay.' Miss Ring sings several songs at the Colonial this week, some of them better than others, but all seemingly of sufficient worth, as she sings them, at least, to get the entire audience in humming sympathy with her. She coaxes them with 'Kiss Me Right,' leads them on with 'The Billiken Man', and gets them fairly crooning with delight over 'Yip-I-Addy-I-Ay'."

It was probably reviews such as these which encouraged the Victor people to approach Miss Ring about the possibility of recording a few numbers for them. Miss Ring's association with Victor seems to have been confined to the years 1909 and 1910, and while I was not able to find reference in "The Voice of the Victor" to the initiation of her association with them, the September 1909 issued reports:

TREMENDOUS SALE OF BLANCHE RING RECORDS

The immense sale of Blanche Ring records, which seems to strike a general average all over the country, certainly shows that in securing the exclusive services of this popular comedienne, we seem to have hit on what all owners of Victors were waiting for.

'Yip! I Adee! I Aye!' is selling tremendously, and the 'Billiken Man' and 'I've Got Rings on My Fingers', her two latest successes, are running close up.



There is a natural swing to all three of these records, and they are all so typically Blanche Ring songs that we believe a little effort will boost their sale to record-breaking figures. Just to see what can be done, we ask each Dealer to play a Blanche Ring record for every customer that enters his store."

In the same issue, a double-page magazine advertisement reads:

NEW VICTOR RECORDS FOR SEPTEMBER ON SALE
THROUGHOUT AMERICA ON AUGUST 28.
BLANCHE RING singing her 'Billiken Song'.
Another rollicking number by this charming comedy star.
This time her selection is 'The Billiken Man', and she
sings it spiritedly with the same natural buoyancy, unflag-
ging vitality and apparent joy that mark everything she
does. 5731 The Billiken Man

I would not venture a guess as to how many "Dealers" actually played a Blanche Ring record "for every customer" who entered his store, but certainly her initial venture into the recording field proved successful. That her re-classification as a "Purple Label" artist the following year was an economic move, rather than a reward for her popularity and talent, is revealed by this article which appeared in "The Voice of the Victor" in the May-June issue of 1910:

BLANCHE RING ENTERS INTO AN EXCLUSIVE
CONTRACT WITH VICTOR COMPANY

Victor dealers will welcome the announcement that Miss Blanche Ring has just signed a three-year contract to make talking machine records for the Victor Talking Machine Company only, giving us the exclusive right to advertise and sell records of her voice in all parts of the world.

Owing to the great expense involved in securing such a contract, it has been necessary to put the three 60-cent records now listed by the artist into the 75-cent Purple Label Class, as follows:

Old No.	New No.	
5731	60015	Billiken Man
5737	60016	I've Got Rings on My Fingers
5692	60017	Yip! I Adee! I Aye!

The small stock of old numbers outstanding may, however, be sold at the former price of 60 cents, as now on the label.

It is, of course, understood that you may expect rapid selling additions to this popular artist's list of records.

However, if the dealers had such expectations, they were disappointed. As far as I am able to determine, the May 1911 Victor catalogue lists all of her records which were issued by Victor, so presumably, only the first part of her three-year exclusive contract proved to be productive. The additional records are:

60024	Nora Malone (Von-Tilzer-McCree)
60025	Top O' the Morning (Hobart - Hein)
60032	Come, Josephine, in My Flying Machine (Bryan-Fischer)

Of the last song, a novelty number which is sometimes remembered now, and sung with tongue-in-cheek, as one would sing a song which reflects a more naive, less sophisticated era, the catalogue says:

"Breezy Blanche Ring's latest popular hit, which she says is another 'Yip-I-Addy-I-Ay', and which has set all New York humming and whistling, is now offered to record buyers everywhere. It is one of the best numbers she has recorded. A most up-to-date subject has been chosen by Mr. Bryan, set to catchy music by Mr. Fischer, and the whole sung by this charming comedienne with refreshing clearness.

Miss Ring, as a thoroughly professional artist, was always aware of the importance of selecting suitable material, and chose her songs carefully.

"Generally speaking," said Miss Ring, "it's wading up to your waist in piles of hopeless manuscripts until you come to one that has something that sounds singable in it. There must be words that repeat themselves to you, and catch your fancy. The words of a refrain are half a song.

... People like a rather silly refrain. I don't know why, but they do. Perhaps it's because slight-hearted nonsense rests us. At any rate, there's the fact. You can no more move it than you can the Rock of Gibraltar... The refrain of 'Yip I Adee' caught because it was nonsense."

"The refrain is fifty percent of the success of a song. The other half is the little lilt in the melody. No song was ever successful that did not have a catchy little singable strain running through it."

"The best song I ever had was in 'In the Good Old Summer Time'. I carried it to A. H. Chamberlyn, who was putting on 'The Defender'. He said: 'I need a song, I'll take it'. Said I, very timidly: 'But to get it you will have to let me sing it.' He scowled. 'Can you sing it?' he demanded, looking as though he thought I couldn't. 'I think I can', I said, by no means sure."

"I have never sung an unclean line and I never will! My audiences wouldn't let me sing such songs if I wished. They insist upon my singing well washed and cheerful songs as they insist on my always being in a good humor. I wouldn't dare go before them in any other mood."

Unfortunately, collectors of Miss Ring's records will have to be satisfied with only the few recordings of her voice which were issued, and probably will never hear the three additional sides which she recorded for Victor and were not released. These are: "Eily Riley", recorded in 1909; and "Louisiana Lizabeth" and "Let's Make Love Among the Roses", recorded in 1910.

Perhaps it was Miss Ring's dissatisfaction with her own records that was responsible for Victor not issuing these selections, and discouraged the artist from recording additional songs. Miles Kreuger, a New York collector, radio personality, and source of the information on Miss Ring's unreleased discs, quotes the artist as telling him, several years ago, that she disliked her records because they made her sound as if she "were singing at the bottom of a well." In any event, Miss Ring came before the recording horn at least one more time. The Pathe catalogue for 1920 lists one side by Miss Ring - "Barney Come Over Here" (#22419), coupled with "Under the Yum Yum Tree," sung by Billy Jones. Perhaps other Pathe catalogues, to which I do not have access, list other recordings by her. Miss Ring's records are choice examples of the artistry of one of the most talented singing comediennes of the twentieth century.

ADDENDUM

Blanche Ring died in a nursing home in Santa Monica, California on January 13, 1961 -- several weeks after the completion of this article. Had she lived until April 24, she would have been ninety years old. She is survived by a son by her first marriage, Gordon Eliot MacNichol, and her brother, Cyril.

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ONE OF THE JOHNSON BOYS

by Woody Bockensto

In the "Red Nichols Souvenir Issue" (RR Issue 12, April/May, 1957), we mentioned that JOHNNY JOHNSON gave Red his first opportunity to organize and lead a band of his own. This is the JOHNSON who gets the nod as the subject of this article.

Johnny was born, Malcolm Clinton Johnson, in Washington, Indiana. He received the usual piano education as a youngster. The "finger of fate" began to influence his career at the ripe old age of thirteen when he accepted a position at the local nickel-odeon, "playing the pictures," at \$5.00 a week. He lost this job when he asked for a \$1.00 raise. However, he caught on with the local dance band which allowed him to carry on with the improvisation which the brief movie career had started.

In 1920, Johnny attended Indiana U. To pay for his college expenses, he took advantage of eleven years of classical instruction and his flair for improvisation by playing at the Princess Theater in Bloomington, Ind. as well as week end dances at the school, plus trips into cities in Indiana, Kentucky, and Illinois. He was also a member of the University Orchestra and accompanist for the University Glee Club.

Johnny sacrificed a promising career in journalism for the "lure of the loot" when he was asked to accompany the Ralph Dunbar Salon Singers on a tour of the Keith-Orpheum circuit. In 1922 and 1923 he had his own band at Ross Fenton Farms in Asbury Park, N. J., owned by A. J. Albright of the Rubberset Co. in Newark. Being near the "Big Apple" he later moved to Pelham Heath Inn and the big time.

In 1926, Johnny was making records for Columbia in New York and playing piano for the Ben Bernie Orchestra. The following year, he was selected by E. M. Statler to take his own band into the Statler Pennsylvania Hotel in New York City, following Vincent Lopez. At the same time, Johnson signed to record with RCA Victor. This gave him a chance to develop his arranging ability.

After a year at the Hotel Pennsylvania, Johnny signed with Music Corporation of America -- this association led to tours of every state in the Union as well as trips to France, Germany, and South America. Later his band recorded for the Pathe-Perfect labels.

In 1942, with 30 years in the "School of Experience," Johnson became aware of the lack of an adequate method to teach popular piano in a professional manner. He began to work on a course that would enable classical teachers and pianists to acquire a broader knowledge. As Johnny says, "The years spent in helping people to get drunk and disorderly have equipped me to spend the rest of my life doing something constructive." To this he has dedicated himself.

Out of this came Johnny's arranging service aimed at converting any classically trained musician into an expert performer of popular music. In addition he developed courses which train pianists to rearrange the published vocal copy of a popular song and convert it into an instrumental solo. He now conducts his "Modern American Piano Rhythms" workshop at his home in West Long Branch (Box 154), New Jersey. He maintains a class of representative pupils to aid his research. To keep the fingers active and to exploit his ideas, he plays nightly at a resort hotel in the shore area, with occasional dance work.

Mrs. Johnson is his receptionist, secretary, shipping clerk, errand boy, chief cook, and bottle washer. A daughter, Joan Johnson Kayne, has followed in her father's footsteps with the act of "Joan and Stanley Kayne". His son Malcolm Jr. is nuclear physics editor for McGraw-Hill Publishing Co. and a younger son Dick, after two years in Germany with our Army, joined forces with The Travellers Insurance Co.

Research for the Johnny Johnson article has made it possible to dwell deeper into the early activities of Red Nichols -- the period surrounding the part that Johnson played

At the end of the second season at Ross Fenton Farms, Johnny Johnson contracted with Harry Susskind to take an 8 piece band to Pelham Heath Inn, in New York. Johnny hired Red Nichols, Chuck Campbell, and Dusty Rhoades for this band because of the reputation they had gained with the SYNCOPATING FIVE, a cooperative band from Indiana. Johnson had sent Dusty Rhoades over to Terre Haute, Ind. in August 1923 to hire Harry McDaniel. These men, together with Frank Crum (sax), Bill Morse (vi), and Neal Litt (bjo), from the Ross Fenton Farms band rehearsed for one week before opening at Pelham Heath Inn. On Friday, September 14, 1923, in New York City, the big attraction was the Dempsey-Firpo fight --- the next night Johnny Johnson's band opened at the Inn.

To clarify the record, Campbell, Nichols, and Rhoades joined about September 1, 1923 and played the last week at Ross Fenton Farms -- Sleepy Hall (g) came down from Yale and sat in during this week. Nichols replaced Bob Ashford in the Johnson band. These three men had left the SYNCOPATING FIVE about June 1923 -- Dusty Rhoades joined Hoagy Carmichael at Casino Gardens in Indianapolis. Nichols and Campbell tossed in with Joe Thomas at Lake James, Ind. This was a good band, often referred to as the Notre Dame band. The personnel was: Joe Thomas (p), Red (c), Chuck (tb); Bill Brown (sax & cl), Perce Connally (vi), Ralph Dumpke (bjo & vocals), and Bud Hanton (dm). Good friends of this band were Walter O'Keefe and Charles Butterworth who spent most of their time with this group.

Several days after the Pelham opening, Frank Crum announced that he had a recording date for the band -- it was actually Johnson's band but Ernie Stevens was at the piano instead of Johnson, for it was Stevens' booking with Edison. Here are the details:

September 24, 1923 - New York City

9175 Ed 51253 When You Walked Out Someone Else Walked
Right In

9176 Ed 51249 Dirty Hands, Dirty Face

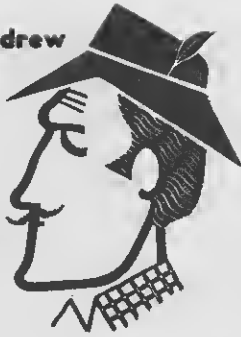
This was the FIRST COMMERCIAL recording date for the boys from Indiana, except for Chuck Campbell who made two sides for Homer Rodeheaver's Rainbow Records with the Warsaw Indiana Elk's Club Orch.



(continued on page 16)

john mc andrew

STAR
STUDED
SHELLAC



THE HOUSE BANDS OF YESTERDAY

Reams have been written about the dance bands of the acoustical era, both straight and jazz, from Prince's, Earl Fuller's, ODJB through Whiteman and beyond, but I've seen nary a word about that which, to me, is one of the most fascinating products of these times: the house band. Dismissing the studio groups that ground out light and not so light classics, Viennese Waltzes and world-wide standards with varying degrees of success and failure, my interest has lain with the studio-born counterpart of the dance and jazz band of the day. Even as late as the early twenties, you'll find Columbia Band and Victor Band essaying tunes of the times such as Poor Butterfly, Chinatown, When You Wore a Tulip and some of the waltzes. It was not until 1922, however, that any of the studio groups began emulating the many popular dance bands and show an individuality that many of the over-all stylized name bands lacked.

The first really excellent house dance band appears to have been The Great White Way Orchestra. Its tenure was brief, including about two dozen sides, but for their time they were remarkable indeed. The arrangements on all of them were fresh and in many instances several leaps ahead of the name bands; the playing was clean and sprightly, and the recording clear and much more solid than similar aggregations, even on the same label--Victor. I do not know who guided this superior organization, but I note that on their very first release, Tomorrow (Vi 18964), the label lists a piano duet by Hugo Frey and Frank Banta. Frey was then or soon was to be conducting The Troubadours, the most perennial of the Victor dance groups from this time until about 1940, and I am inclined to believe he may also have been the guiding hand responsible for the amazingly high quality of the Great White Way sides. The orchestra had interesting solo work, and used the soloists frequently as voices calling to each other and interweaving and blending in a way that later became common practice but which was virtually unknown then. They would from time to time fit in snatches of wailing clarinet, muted trumpet and other concessions to the then high-riding Ted Lewis style, but they never descended to the embarrassing maudlinity of Lewis and many others. There was no jazz in The Great White Way Orchestra, but there was a fine beat and intelligent syncopation, and the arrangements always enhanced the number they were bringing into focus. It was always in focus, too, and almost every side they made excels those of the same melody committed to grooves by many other labels. Their rendition of Swingin' Down the Lane is infinitely superior in all ways to the version cut for Brunswick by its creator, Isham Jones. Compared to the GWW version (Vi 19058), Jones' beat, which never was his strong point, is uncertain, the recording a bit diffuse, the arrangement slightly muddy. An even better performance and equally crisp recording backs the GWW gem: Beside a Babbling Brook, which is incomparably ahead of all competitive interpretations of that vintage. That some of the No. 1 songs of the day were assigned to the orchestra seems to show that their worth was appreciated despite their brief existence. Their cream of the crop includes Runnin' Wild (Vi 19063), When June Comes Along with a Song (from Geo. M. Cohan's 'Rise of Rosie O'Reilly' - Vi

19091), Carolina Mammy (Vi 19087), Wild Flower (Youman's Wild Flower - Vi 19077), Down Among the Sleepy Hills of Tennessee (Vi 19055), Yes! We Have No Bananas (Vi 19068), Barney Google (Vi 19093) and Blue Hoosier Blues (Vi 19108). It is interesting to note that some of the GW sides are backed by The Troubadours and, more particularly, the first of the International Novelty Orchestra popular sides, and it seems to me the likelihood is that the nucleus of the group was absorbed subsequently into the International Novelty setup, although there was one other group gotten together at Victor, with Hugo Frey at the helm, right after the demise of GWW and before the International pop group began to record songs of the day more frequently. This was called The Manhattan Merrymakers, and they had a distinctly different style and approach than GWW. They were expert but more refined than the earlier group, and less colorful. Victor may have felt less sure of them, too, as more often than not, single sides by The Manhattan Merrymakers would be coupled with one by a famous dance band: Every Night I Cry Myself to Sleep Over You had Whiteman doing Mama Loves Papa with it; I Never Had a Mammy was paired with Wonder If She's Lonely Too by Charles Dornberger's Ork.; Love, My Heart is Calling You had Brooke Johns' boys doing Nobody But You; Love Song was matched with another Brooke Johns, Take, Oh Take Those Lips Away; Ted Morse Medley was matched to Ted Weems' My Gal Sal, and When Mother Sings had Lovey Came Back by Garber-Davis Orch. Altogether, The Manhattan Merrymakers did no more than a dozen or so sides, interspersed with an occasional accompaniment of one of Victor's top singers of the era such as Aileen Stanley or Billy Murray.

They were very pleasant sides, much smoother than the run-of-the-mill Fox-Trot pounders hacking away painfully at some of the loveliest songs of the twenties, and it does indicate that Victor appreciated their worth that The Manhattan Merrymakers recorded several very big hits as part of their slim output.

While The Great White Way Orchestra and The Manhattan Merrymakers were shining briefly, The Troubadours were going along unobtrusively, sticking for the most part to waltzes, but doing them with distinction. Within the same period that saw the birth and death of both of the other dance purveyors, The Troubadours committed forty or more sides to wax and posterity, and occasionally they did do a few Fox-Trots in International Novelty style that had slight jazz overtones, if not much more. These included Hula Lou and After the Storm (Vi 19296) and Rock-a-Bye My Baby Blues (Vi 19387).

Actually, the name, The Troubadours, had been used by Victor for occasional standard sides for several years prior to this, and one suspects that for the same type of number the group must have been practically the same, and it is very probable that up to the very end, several of the band members of all of these groups served on all of them, the most accomplished of which by far was to be Nat Shilkret and the Victor Orchestra.

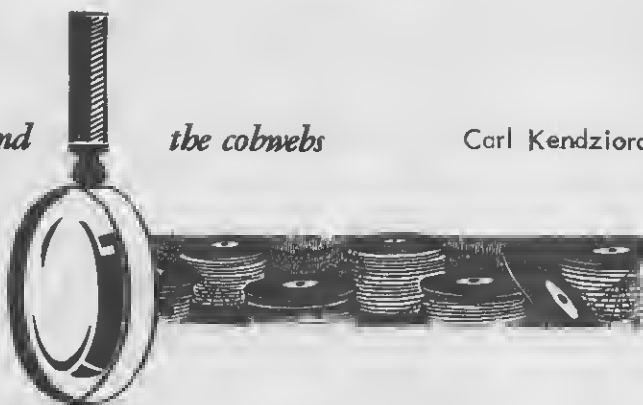
International Novelty Orchestra was by now beginning to devote more time to straight popular numbers, and up to the end of acoustical recording early in 1925 their last few horn recordings included Say It Again/Innocent Eyes (Vi 19288), I Love Me (19121), Jealous (19332), Take a Little One-Step (19294), When Will the Sun Shine for Me (19069), and She Loves Me (19439). By this time, Nat Shilkret was the guiding star of the group, which was winning sufficient acclaim with its recordings and occasional radio performances tying in with Victor's air advertising to make a few successful personal stage appearances at Movie Presentation houses, including the now defunct Mark Strand Theatre in Brooklyn.

Whether or not Jack Shilkret and His Orchestra was a precursor of the Nat Shilkret aggregation I do not know, but perhaps it is significant that the former band began recording under that name early in 1925: Clap Hands, Here Comes Charley (Vi 19859), Here in My Arms (Vi 19868), If You Knew Suzie (19675), Sometime (19745) and others, and after a dozen or so sides they vanished and Nat Shilkret and the Victor Orch. first appeared, and it is interesting to note that the last Jack Shilkret side is Vi

behind

the cobwebs

Carl Kendziora



First, the second of our thumbnail resumes. One of Grey Gull's stable of labels is AMCO. The name is probably derived from the name of the store or chain selling it (Allied Merchandising Company or some similar name, for example) and its relative scarcity is undoubtedly due to the limited outlet of a single store or chain of stores. No manufacturer or seller credits appear on the label which contains only the name AMCO and an "A" in an oval. Like most Grey Gull labels, AMCO uses the same catalog number as the corresponding coupling on Grey Gull itself. The range of AMCO catalog numbers known at present is very limited with a span of only fifty in the main, or "dance" series. These range from 1231 to 12B1. In the "vocal" series we have only listed from 216B to 2174 and in the "standard" series only one is represented, 4044. This is an extremely small area of the range of Grey Gull catalog numbers; the masters appearing on these records in this range are mostly those of the Emerson Recording Labs (3400 - 3500 - 3600 series) with a scattering of ones from other sources. The date for AMCO issues (if issued concurrently with the same catalog numbers on Grey Gull itself, as we would presume) would appear to be 1924. Further supporting the theory that AMCO was sold by a single store or chain of stores, is the repeated appearance of AMCO issues where the labels are pasted over Grey Gull or Radiex ones. We feel that this indicates that Grey Gull did not keep large stocks of AMCO pressings on hand and, when more copies than were on hand were needed, it was easier (and also cheaper!) to take existing stock of Grey Gull or Radiex and paste AMCO labels over them instead of specially pressing extra AMCO discs.

Neglected recently has been our obscure record of the month feature. We offer for your consideration QRS Q-1055: A. I Like To Do Things For You (2374-1)/B. That's Where You're Wrong (2375-2) as by Pletcher's Eli Prom Trotters (vocal on "A" side by Stewart Pletcher). This is the later red and gold QRS label with credit by Cova Recording Corp. New York City. This would appear to be 1930 vintage and is a fine hot group. Trumpet is presumably Stew Pletcher. The sides feature fine solos on trumpet, trombone, clarinet, sax and piano. Band

seems to consist of two trumpets, a trombone, three reeds, piano, guitar, bass and drums. Sides are well recorded and swing mightily! Well worth having in your collection! Any further information on the personnel would be appreciated.

Another member of the "private" label issues by Gennett has been noted by Perry Armagnac in the collection of Les Zeiger. It is a green and gold WILHELM label with no catalog number. Details: Spring Frolic (11288A), composed, whistled and accompanied by Ruth Wilhelm / Grand-Valse (11290), whistled and accompanied by Ruth Wilhelm.

EMPIRE: In issue 29 we speculated about comparison of EMPIRE 507 with OPERAPHONE 31136. Perry Armagnac acquired a copy of the OPERAPHONE and it has been compared with the EMPIRE and both sides are identical. The Ole Miss Blues has also been compared with the Wadsworth's Novelty Dance Orchestra version (T-67946-1) on PATHE 22206 with the same result.

Label of the Month: Among the scarcest and least documented of records are those which presumably were never sold over the counter but were distributed in one way or another for publicity or other purposes. One type of record in this class is the disc pressed for a phonograph manufacturer to be given away with the purchase of a phonograph. A famous label in this category is BUDDY pressed by GENNETT from GENNETT masters for the manufacturers of the BUDDY phonograph. These records were not themselves sold but a given quantity were included with each new phonograph sold. Our label this time seems to be another example of this. It is a cross (or "mule") coupling: VIOLA 17101-B/17109-A. The label is blue and gold and is claimed by Southern California Phonograph Mfg. Co., Los Angeles. The design at the top consists of a phonograph encircled by a wreath across which appear the words: Viola Phonograph/The Soul of Music/Play All Records. The catalog numbers are those of the original OLYMPIC issues of these sides. Data on the VIOLA (17109-A illustrated) are: 17101-B - Little Mother of Mine as by Greek Evans, Baritone with Orchestra/17109-A - When You and I Were Young Maggie as by Howard Shelley, Baritone with Orchestra. The OLYMPIC issues (Same credits except spelling of Shelly (sic)

were released May and August 1921 respectively. 17109-A has been issued on many labels under a number of varying credits. Some of these are: BANNER 201B-B as by Howard Shelley, Tenor; NATIONAL MUSIC LOVERS 1014-B as by Carl Williams, Tenor; MASTER TONE 1013-B as by Carl Williams, Tenor; BD&M labels (PURITAN, TRIANGLE, BROADWAY, etc.) 9106 as by Carl Williams Tenor; BLACKSWAN 1B04B-B as by Herbert Black, Baritone. Releases range from original OLYMPIC in August 1921 to the BLACK SWAN in September 1922. No master numbers appear on any of the issues; some show one or more of the catalog numbers listed above. BD&M issues (plus the MASTER TONE and NML issues which stem from BD&M) show a control number in NYRL's control series, 112.



This is the only VIOLA pressing seen to date. It is in the collection of fellow researcher Perry Armagnac. Further VIOLA issues and additional releases of the Shell(e)y or Evans titles are solicited. We are always interested in augmenting the wanderings of these masters!

A note to those who have written us and have not heard anything from this end: Our apologies, we are trying to complete the PERFECT Numerical and have had to neglect our correspondence almost completely for the time being. Once the PERFECT project is in the can and ready for publication in this magazine, we will try to get back to your queries and comments. We appreciate your interest and patience! As mentioned in most of our columns (look back and refresh your memories) we are most anxious for data from you on records on the "small" labels of the twenties. Send them to us at Salem Road, RFD 2, Pound Ridge, New York or c/o this publication. Until next time, keep digging!

COMING
A BIG DOUBLE ISSUE
with a suprising
feature
COMING

THE AMERICAN MINSTREL THEATRE ON PHONOGRAPH RECORDS

1894-1929

A. R. Danberg

Part 7

(continued from issue 32)

Columbia's 1913 catalogue included some Additional Minstrel Records:

- 36708 Columbia A 5497 (12")
"De Golden Wedding" - "Angel Gabriel" - "Bye Bye Eva"
- 36771 "A Day with the Soldiers"
Peerless Quartette
- 30872 Columbia A 5346 (12")
"In Morning by Brite Light" -
"Everybody Whistles Like Me"
"Melancholy Mose"
- 30850 Working on the Farm - Comic
Specialty. Golden and Hughes.
- 30782 Columbia A 5309 (12")
"My Dusky Rose" - "Oh Dem
Golden Slippers" - "Ain't Goin'
Weep" Arthur Collins
- 30783 "At the Telephone" Male Qt.

Columbia 1915 Catalogue:

- 37043 Columbia A 5614 (12")
"I Don't Care if Never Come
Back" - "Push Clouds Away" -
"Goodbye Manhattan Isle"
- 36849 "Clammy Green" (original)
Golden and Hughes.

Columbia 1917 Catalogue:

- 98070 Columbia A 6231
LASSES WHITE MINSTRELS
Old Time Minstrels - I
- 98071 Old Time Minstrels - II

After 1915, Victor did not add any new minstrel material to their catalogues. Until about 1920, each minstrel list in the catalogues totaled about twenty selections, but after this date, the lists steadily diminished; by 1926 Victor catalogues do not include any minstrel classification.

In every catalogue from 1918-1924, Columbia had about eight minstrel items listed under "Negro Airs and Plantation Medlies". The 1924/1925 catalogues added:

- MNA Columbia A 3871 (10")
LASSES WHITE MINSTRELS
Levee Scene
& Plantation Scene.

In 1926, Columbia had a new catalogue form; there was no title "Negro Airs and Plantation Medlies" and the only minstrel record appeared under "Race Records":

- MNA Columbia 14004D (10")
GULF COAST MINSTRELS
"I Ain't Skeered of Work"
& "Darktown Camp Meeting".

From 1928, the Columbia catalogues do not include any minstrel material.

The available Edison catalogues also show few minstrel listings after 1917. In that year, the Empire Vaudeville Company made another "Amateur Minstrel Rehearsal Play" disc, on which Edward Warren Meeker sang George Johnson's famous "Laughing Song." Then, in 1927, Edison listed

- MNA Edison 51363
MINSTRELSY OF OTHER DAYS
Part 1. "Landstrum Galop," Down
Where Cotton Blossoms Grow" &
"Trans-Mag-Ni-Fi-Can-Bam-
Dam-U-Al-I-Ty"
& Part 2. "When Harvest Days are
Over" and "My Castle on the
Nile" - Empire Vaudeville &
Minstrel Co.

Sometime before 1917, and continuing until about 1920, the organization known as the Eight Famous Victor Artists made concert tours. This troupe appeared in many towns over the U. S. and may have spurred interest in the minstrel show records, although no definite information is available.

The Eight Famous Victor Artists (or as they were first known about 1910, "The Record Maker Troupe") were an established favorite in vaudeville and concert stages for many years. Before a concert, local newspapers were likely to contain this advertisement:

LOOK; YOU KNOW THESE BOYS.
THEY POSITIVELY APPEAR!
(Not a Moving Picture)

- Henry Burr - Tenor
- Arthur Collins - Baritone
- Albert Campbell - Tenor
- Theodore Morse - Piano
- John H. Meyer - Bass
- Billy Murray - Tenor
- The Sterling Trio
- Byron G. Harlan - Tenor
- Vess L. Ossman - Banjoist
- The Peerless Quartet

Tickets were 75¢, and the audience got a long show for its money. The Eight Famous Artists, wearing formal black evening dress, sat in the minstrel semi-circle. Billy Murray introduced each member of the troupe, and everyone took turns with solos. Collins and Harlan, despite their short stature and 200 pound bulk, which tended to deflate some feminine admirers who had idealized their images from their voices on the records, were among the most popular Artists in the show. On stage they performed bits of dialogue from their

minstrel records, and Collins always brought down the house with "The Preacher and the Bear." The grand finale of the concert was "The Star Spangled Banner," sung by the entire company, Murray in front leading with a baton.

Besides the group of recording minstrel artists discussed in this article, there were other performers and other records about which information is now incomplete. After 1919, for example, Al Bernard recorded for Edison and "different companies" until he organized the Record Boys and appeared on the radio. During his radio career, Bernard was with the Record Boys and the "Dutch Masters Minstrels", and he was finally featured on N.B.C. as "Al Bernard the Minstrel Man."

This much is known, but documentation of his recorded minstrels - if any - is not now available. There are also many minstrel records on smaller labels, some of them very old, but their issue dates are uncertain.

- MNA Standard Disc Record A 480
(From A Columbia Master)
Tenor - "Old Log Cabin in the Lane"
Minstrels
- " Zonophone C 5073
IMPERIAL MINSTRELS
"Upon the Golden Shore"
- Little Wonder 169
- 169B42 DUET "The Minstrel Parade"
- 25 Little Wonder 342
MINSTRELS - PART III
"Darktown is Out Tonight"
- 343-1 Little Wonder 343
MINSTRELS - PART IV
"Goodbye Eliza Jane"
- MNA Climax 804
CLIMAX MINSTRELS - 1st PART
"Old Folks at Home"
- " Harmony A 465
RAMBLER MINSTRELS - "E"
"Crocodile Isle"
- 3449-2 Harmony 479
RAMBLER MINSTRELS - "B"
Solo, Orch. Acc.
- MNA Leeds Records 4178
S. Q. & O. - SQUASHTOWN
AMATEUR MINSTRELS

(continued on page 24)



Months ago the postman brought me a pleasant surprise. Tightly wrapped I found "JAZZ bucherie 5 - ein portrat - Red Nichols". Written on the first page was: "To Woody from Horst Lange - 18/VII/60". My German being a bit more than rusty, I could only thumb the booklet for an overall impression.

A prompt "thank you" note was dispatched to Horst H. Lange which pointed out that the booklet was neatly done, the photos were interesting, the art work and printing were very professional, and it appeared to be an excellent piece of work. However, I detected some erroneous information. I also commented that no credits or acknowledgements appeared in the booklet -- a criticism other reviewers had noted in some of his other books.

Horst hastened to explain that because of the publication deadline the booklet was prepared in a minimum time period. Also, he had written a "Forward" which acknowledged the source of his information --- the pages of RECORD RESEARCH receiving prime billing --- but due to length limitations the publishers had deleted this section.

A brief rundown of the booklet might be of interest. The story content occupies 38 pages, 5"x7" size. A 5-page (small print) German-label discography of Red Nichols follows--this generally repeats personnel errors perpetuated by the standard discographies for the older tunes while the more recent recordings are accurate because data were supplied by Capitol Records, Inc. Included are 16 full-page photos: two of Red in a 1956 Capitol session, relatively recent pictures of Harry Reser, Miff Mole, Jimmy Dorsey, Jack Teagarden, Benny Goodman, Gene Krupa, Glenn Miller, Cozy Cole, Frank Sinatra, and Bobby Hackett, plus a photo of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, one of Paul Whiteman and his large orchestra, one of Bix Beiderbecke with the 1924 Wolverines, and a photo of the modern Five Pennies or "about 1944". To set the record straight this last-mentioned photo was actually taken in 1950 at Sardi's in Los Angeles and shows (l to r): Joe Rushton (b sax), King Jackson (tb), Red (c), Rollie Culver (dm), Rosy McHargue (cl), and Bobby Hammack (p).

The story starts out by describing the fact that Red was not held high in the eyes of critics and the fallacies that surround this type of reporting. Much of the remaining text was reported previously in RECORD RESEARCH. While our own research has been tedious and aimed at accurate accounting, some minor bits of misinformation have crept in --- unfortunately all of these reappear, along with others, in Lange's booklet.

The story of Red's first recording with the SYNCOPATING FIVE is not completely accurate --- this will be straightened out in a later issue of R.R. The Johnny Johnson period is not accurate but has been clarified in another article submitted to R.R. When we mentioned Red fronting his first band at the Pelham Heath Inn it was misprinted Pelham Health --- this misprint also found its way into one of George Hoefler's columns in DOWN BEAT and Lange repeated it again. Horst reports Bix rooming with Red in NYC while Red was with Sam Lanin and appearing at Roseland the same time as the Wolverines. At that time Red was with the California Ramblers as reported earlier in R.R.

Some stories lost authenticity in translation. For example, a Benny Carter quote we used years ago was misquoted completely, giving it an entirely different connotation. Lange also reports that Red had Victor D'Ippolito fill in for him many times -- this is not true and Vic never handled 'hot' work normally assigned to Red. The first Columbia recording by Lanin's Redheads was not Red's session - it belonged to Sam Lanin who contracted the men. The personnel reported is doubtful. The book has Nichols moving

(continued, bottom, column right)

BEYOND THE IMPRESSION

REPORTED BY JOHN STEINER

Frank Trumbauer told me that his first solo recording was for Gene Rodemich on Brunswick. He was uncertain about the title, but mentioned it having an Egyptian or Oriental turn. I have sought the record for years without uncovering anything closer than the remotely Trumbauerian solos on

GENE RODEMICH'S ORCHESTRA

Cry Baby Blues (Meyer) Br 2159
Just Like A Rainbow (Earl-Fiorito)

I'd certainly appreciate confirmation or denial of Trumbauer's presence.

A recent note about Frankie Quartell brought several inquiries concerning his

FRANKIE QUARTELL & HIS MELODY BOYS

Prince of Walls (8790 a) OK 40258

Upon a fresh hearing, Frankie confirmed the data which he had given me a year or two ago concerning this date. This was a band which Quartell organized in early 1925 soon after returning to Chicago from his long stay with the Paul Specht Band. The band was booked by Arnold Johnson who was then devoting most of his energies to the booking business in Chicago. Quartell had played in earlier Arnold Bands (but probably no recording). The Melody Boys were installed at the Montmartre (formerly and subsequently called the Green Mill Gardens) at Lawrence and Broadway on the upper North Side. The personnel was:

Frank Quartell	trumpet
Louis Shattel (or Shatel)	trombone
Maurice Morris	1st alto
Al Hyatt	reeds, novelty, hot clar.
(Hyatt had led the Seattle Harmony Kings before Eddie Neibaur took over)	
Dave (or Abe) Sholden	tenor
Earl Wright	banjo
Jules Cassard	string bass
(Cassard was co-composer of Angry)	
Johnny Petrone	piano
Danny Alvin	drums
(Danny had been just previously with a Sophie Tucker unit)	

The same group recorded also the title Heartbroken Strain at the request of the A&R man. Frank remembers Heartbroken particularly because Danny Alvin fumbled the accents several times, cymbal punctuations.

During Quartell's appearance at Montmartre, Julia Gerity (see J. Directory) was the vocal star. Helen Morgan was the vocalist singing intimately at the tables, as also did Ruth Etting who was Helen's roommate. Frank Libuse was a comedy waiter-entertainer, Bill Robinson was the show's dancer, Ted Leary was MC, Joe and Henry Thearty did a piano and song act, and there was the usual Apache dance team. These were the early days of the massive night clubs which were then recreated in the musical talkies a few years later.

"SMALL CHANGE"

out west sooner than he did and a bit too much is assumed from the various records Red made since 1940.

Horst Lange, living in Germany, has been a prolific jazz writer and discographer. Working with limited sources he has done much for jazz -- he is to be complimented for his untiring efforts.

HENDERSONIA

Walter C. Allen

From time to time, various collectors have proposed that at least certain of the Harmony - Velvet Tone - Diva recordings labelled as by The Dixie Stompers were NOT by Fletcher Henderson's orchestra. In an early Record Changer, one collector even proposed that some of the early ones were actually by white groups of the Nichols-Mole school. More recently, it has been seriously proposed that the final Dixie Stompers date (Oh Baby, etc.) featured Jabbo Smith and probably other non-Henderson musicians.

On querying Columbia Records about these recordings, they have not been able to supply any positive information from the recording files that the Dixie Stompers sessions were by Henderson units. The editors of this journal, however, have told me that they have played every Dixie Stompers side for ex-Henderson men like Don Redman and Buster Bailey, and that there was not the slightest doubt to these musicians that they were all Henderson recordings. I have also listened to all of them, and I agree; certainly, Henderson soloists abound on every session.

What is not generally known, however, is that many, if not all, of the Dixie Stompers sessions were recorded by units smaller in number than the full Henderson orchestra. There is no official record of the instrumentation of these sessions in the Columbia files; they were all acoustically recorded on older equipment, possibly even in different studios, and probably under different supervision than the electrically-recorded dates scheduled for the Columbia label. Based upon my aural observations, however, the instrumentations for each session are reconstructed below, along with the names of identified soloists.

Nov. 23, 1925 date: (141301-02) - 1 tp (Joe Smith); 1 Tb (Green); 3 reeds (Bailey cl, Redman alto, Hawkins bass sax); piano; banjo; drums.

Dec. 22, 1925 date: (141303 - remake), 141422-23-24) - 2 Tp (Joe Smith solos); 1 Tb (Green); 3 reeds (Bailey, cl; Redman; alto, goofus, vocal; Hawkins, tenor & bass saxes); piano; banjo; drums.

Jan. 20, 1926 date: (141526-27-28) - 2 tp (Joe Smith, solos); 1 tb (Green); 3 reeds (Bailey cl; Redman vocal); piano; banjo; drums.

(This date, by the way, is undoubtedly the one once thought to be by a Red Nichols group; Nervous Charlie Stomp, a Nichols tune, and Black Horse Stomp, by Joe Tarto, were certainly arranged and played in a manner imitating the white New York style.)

March 22, 1926 date: (141832-33-34) - 2 tp (no solos); 1 tb (Green); 3 reeds (Hawkins, tenor); piano; banjo; drums.

April 14, 1926 date: (141958-59-60) - 2 tp (Joe Smith); 1tb (Green); 3 reeds (Hawkins tenor; Redman vocal); piano; banjo; drums.

Oct. 20, 1926 date: (142845-46-47) - 2 or 3 tp (Rex Stewart); 1 tb; 3 reeds (Bailey cl; Hawkins tenor); piano; banjo; drums.

Jan. 20, 1927 date: (143332-33-34) - 2 tp (Joe Smith, Tommy Ladnier); 1 tb; 3 reeds (Bailey cl; Hawkins tenor); piano; banjo; tuba; drums.

March 23, 1927 date: (143637-38-39) - 2 tp (Joe Smith, Ladnier); 1 tb; (Jimmy Harrison); 3 reeds (Redman, alto & vocal; Hawkins, tenor); piano; banjo; tuba; drums.

(continued on page 16

H O T D I S C A N A

by
John H. Baker

16 East Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio

FRANKIE 'HALF PINT' JAXON

FRANKIE HALF PINT JAXON Vocal with piano and cornet
Vo 1226 Hit Ta Ditty Low Down (Jaxon)
- - - Down at Jasper's Bar-B-Que (Jaxon)

Both Len Kunstadt and myself have aurally evidenced this recording and we were rather surprised to find the cornetist to be either New York's blues star, Johnny Dunn or a very close facsimile. Jazz Directory (volume 5, p. 784) dated the above coupling as 'Chicago, Oct. 28, 1928'; supplied masters C 2500 (Hit Ta Ditty ...) and C 2502 (Down at Jasper's...) and gave a personnel of "Cow Cow Davenport (p); Tampa Red (g, Kazoo); Jasper Taylor (d)". We would be most interested in learning the source of JD's personnel!

FRANKIE HALF PINT JAXON Vocal with piano, saxophone and banjo

Vo 1285 Let's Knock A Jug (Jaxon)

FRANKIE HALF PINT JAXON Novelty vocal with piano, saxophone and banjo

Vo 1285 Can't You Wait? (Jaxon)

Following a chorus of be bop scattling on 'Let's Knock A Jug' Jaxon intriguingly interjects "Come on Jim ... What's the matter Lil. ... come on lkey ... What's the matter Siff (sic) you ain't so sweet ..." I'm fairly certain that a clarinetist can be heard in addition to the other instrumentation so listed on this side. Comments!!!

Jan Directory (vol. 5, p. 784) dates it 'Chicago, February 13, 1929', supplies masters C 2951 (Let's Knock A Jug) and C 2952 (Can't You Wait) and lists 'unknown sax; p; bj.' as Jaxon's accomp.

ROSA HOLLEY

ROSA HOLLEY Vocal, with piano, trumpet and clarinet
Vo 1179 Dark and Cloudy Blues (Brooks)
Vo -- Lookin' For the Blues (Dawson)

It is my opinion (via aural evidence) that the piano, trumpet and clarinet are Richard M. Jones, Lee Collins and Albert Nicholas respectively. The reference work Jazz Directory (volume 4, p. 708) dated the above coupling as 'early 1928' but did not list the instrumentation nor the masters.

THANK YOU...From the Editors of RR.

The response to our Vocalion Red Records Race listings which appeared in our 31st issue was extraordinary. We're going to print all the addendum in a forthcoming RR or RRB. We would like to thank Walter C. Allen, John Baker, Ian Barclay, Paul Demane, Frank Dutton Bob Graf, John Heinz, Barry Seeger, Rolf Von Arx and W. Williams for their wonderful help. This type of cooperation gives us the incentive to take on another project. Perhaps the obscure 'race' items appearing on the Emerson label would be to your liking. Comments!!

BLUES IN REVIEW

* * * * *

by Barry Hansen

JOHN LEE HOOKER - Vee Jay 366

60-1382 DUSTY ROAD (HOOKER)

Vocal with el. guitars, bass & drums.

60-1624 TUPELO (P.D.)

Vocal with guitar & bass. Recorded at the Newport Jazz Festival, 1960.

TUPELO is the beautiful spoken blues (it's not what is usually called a "talking blues") that Hooker sang on a national TV hook-up last summer and also on Riverside LP 12-838. The Newport performance is, however, a debacle. On the Riverside and on TV, Hooker underplayed the song, letting it sink in naturally without a lot of dramatics. The emotional impact was tremendous. On this record he takes a different approach, and overdramatizes it badly, using a hoarse stage whisper, as if he were telling some Cub Scouts a ghost story. In fact, he sounds like a ghost. Perhaps this was a good approach for some of his folknik audience (which is heard cheering at the end of the record), but for blues collectors who have the Riverside disc available this record remains only an interesting souvenir. The "B" side, DUSTY ROAD, is an attractive number from Hooker's Vee Jay LP, TRAVELIN'.

LIGHTNIN' SLIM - Excello 2186

2186-A COOL DOWN BABY (West)

2186-B NOTHIN' BUT THE DEVIL (West)

Vocals with harmonica, el. gu., drums.

COOL DOWN BABY is Slim's recent ROOSTER BLUES all over again, except it's "cool down baby" instead of "we gotta rock tonight, baby." Enjoyable. NOTHIN' is a good mean blues, which likewise is very similar to several others Slim has done recently. Fine singing and playing, right in Slim's groove; the groove, however, is showing signs of becoming a rut. My copy is pressed very badly off center.

ELMORE JAMES (Chief), ELMO JAMES (Fire)

Fire 1016 133 THE SKY IS CRYING (James) add saxes

134 HELD MY BABY LAST NITE (James) add saxes

Fire 1031 165 DONE SOMEBODY WRONG (James)

166 FINE LITTLE MAMA (James)

Chief C-7020-25-139 CALLING ALL BLUES (Hooker-Wells)

No vocal - add ts, harmonica

25-154 KNOCKING AT YOUR DOOR (James) add ts, harmonica

All Vocals with el. guitar, piano & drums.

James is one of the most active singers today on the South Side, and he has an impressive list of records on many labels. James is about halfway between the Chicago-country style of Muddy Waters, etc. and the more sophisticated style of B. B. King. He is a shouter with a voice that can be quite poignant. His voice has some of the mannerisms of the city, but remains robust and hearty, with none of the city's arrogant sophistication or artificial cuteness. The Fire sides balance James' shouting against a loud, clear, bluesy electric guitar. 1016 is a pair of slow blues; 1031 has a "Latin" number coupled with a medium-speed rocker. The Chief is the best of the three. KNOCKING is a swinging blues in the best Chicago fashion with inense singing and playing all around. The other side is an instrumental (despite what the label says), and it is a beautiful thing with harp, sax, guitar and piano in collective improvisation, producing marvelous sounds. Most R&B instrumentals are solo displays for one instrument, and can get quite dull; but the all-out wailing in CALLING ALL BLUES is fascinating and exciting. There should be many more records like it.

RHYTHM & BLUES

By
ANTHONY
ROTANTE

WOODROW ADAMS

Judging by his recording endeavors (Checker 757 and Meteor 5018) WOODROW ADAMS is one of the most primitive blues singers on wax today. His unorthodox weird free verse with a musical background strongly marked by Oriental overtones (Pretty Baby Blues) is really something to hear.

WOODROW ADAMS & THE THREE B'S (vo); unknown (har); (2 g); (d).
1952

1030 CHECKER 757 PRETTY BABY BLUES (Adams)

1031 CHECKER 757 SHE'S DONE COME AND GONE (Adams)

WOODROW ADAMS WITH BOOGIE BLUES BLASTERS (vo); unknown (har);
(2 g); (d).
ca. 1954

M.R. 5033 METEOR 5018 BABY YOU JUST DON'T KNOW (W.Adams-Leelo)

M.R. 5032 METEOR 5018 WINE HEAD WOMAN (W.Adams-Leslie)

(no details)

1960

HOME OF THE BLUES 109 SOMETHING ON MY MIND

HOME OF THE BLUES 109 SAD AND BLUE

MISS RHAPSODY

VIOLA WELLS UNDERHILL with the melodic working name of MISS RHAPSODY is an above average rhythm-blues singer with classic blues-overtones whose style is reminiscent of her urban blues prototype of the late 1930's. As far as we can ascertain her recording efforts were limited to the year of 1944 and Savoy seems to be her only label. In a recent interview, Brownie McGhee recalled seeing Miss Rhapsody on a label from the Chicago area. This is still to be discovered. Miss Rhapsody must have certainly heard Ethel Waters (Sugar, Sweet Man) and Bessie Smith (Downhearted Blues) as her own recorded versions have comparable vocal phrasing similarities. Fine trumpet by Frankie Newton can be heard behind Miss Rhapsody especially on Downhearted Blues. Slam Stewart (he's unlisted on the label) takes one of his singing bass solos on Sweet Man. Eddie 'Lookjaw' Davis fans would get a charge out of hearing Ed take off on a tremendous hot tenor passage on Night Before Judgement Day. This was quite early in 'Lookjaw's' recording adventures.

With JUNE COLE'S ORCH: June Cole(p); Emmett Berry(tp); 'Foots' Thomas(ts); Billy Taylor(b); Harold Underhill(g); Cozy Cole(d).
(Index to Jazz...) possibly July 6, 1944

S 5475

SAVOY 5510 BYE BYE BABY

S 5476

SAVOY 5510 MY LUCKY DAY

S 5477

SAVOY 5511A HEY LADY MAMA (Cleve Reed)

S 5478

SAVOY 5511B GROOVIN' THE BLUES (Viola Wells)

With REUBEN COLE'S ORCH: Reuben June Cole(p & vo); Frank Newton (tp); Morris Lounds(ts); Slam Stewart(b); Harold Underhill(g); Cozy Cole(d)
date ???

S 5751

SAVOY 536A BLUES IN MY HEART (Carter Mills)

S 5752

SAVOY 536B SUGAR (Pinkard-Aitchell-Alexander)

S 5753

SAVOY 534B DOWNHEARTED BLUES (L.A. Suppa)

S 5754

SAVOY 534A SWEET MAN (Turk-Pinkard)

ORCH. ACC. unknown - Eddie Davis featured on Tenor Sax on
Night Before Judgement Day
date ???

S 5814

SAVOY 5532 HE MAY BE YOUR MAN

S 5815

SAVOY 565B WE'RE SISTERS UNDER THE SKIN (Nieson-Lawrence-

S 5816

SAVOY 565A NIGHT BEFORE JUDGEMENT DAY " " Milton)

S 5817

SAVOY 5532 I FELL FOR YOU

Savoy 5532 as VIOLA WELLS

(continued on next page)

RHYTHM & BLUES (continued)

BABY BOY WARREN

Using Mattie Mae and Sante Fe (Warren originals) as examples of BABY BOY WARREN we find him to be a dispenser of up-tempo urban blues who may be compared to the Big Bill type blue vocalist of the 30s. Warren has a very competent rhythm section with the abrasive sound of the washboard quite prominent. Incidentally he announces the presence of one of the guitarists by calling out the name of 'Calvin' which identifies the guitarist as Calvin Frazier.

BABY BOY WARREN (vo & g) probably 1947

PR 706A STAFF 706, GOTHAM 507 MY SPECIAL FRIEND BLUES
PR 706B STAFF 706, GOTHAM 507 NERVY WOMAN BLUES

same.

STAFF 707 DON'T WANT NO SKINNY WOMAN
STAFF 707 LONESOME CABIN BLUES

same.

STAFF 709, FEDERAL 12008 FORGIVE ME DARLING
STAFF 709, FEDERAL 12008 PLEASE DON'T THINK I'M NOSEY

BABY BOY WARREN (vo & g); acc Calvin Frazier(2nd g); unknown guitar bass); Washboard Willie (wbd). ca. April 1955

BL 54113 BLUE LAKE 106 MATTIE MAE (BBW)
BL 54114 BLUE LAKE 106 SANTE FE (BBW)

BABY BOY WARREN (vo & g); Sonny Boy Williamson (har); Washboard Willie (wbd) Detroit ca. 1955/1956

26 A J V B 26 SNAFEE
26 B J V B 26 HELLO STRANGER

HOUSE BANDS (continued from page 9)

19931 (I Want Somebody to Cheer Me Up), and the first Nat Shilkret is Vi 20113 (Barcelona/On the Riviera). It is also worth noting that the Brooke Johns Orch., which backed a few of the Manhattan Merrymakers sides, is labeled as 'under the direction of Jack Shilkret'. The Brooke Johns Orchestra had been recording sporadically since 1923. Had these two been basically the one organization right through to late 1926?

In any event, the advent of The Great White Way Orchestra, followed by The Manhattan Merrymakers, International Novelty Orchestra and The Troubadours culminated in the formation of one of the most outstanding groups ever to grace the grooves of 78 RPM records, and it is safe to say that every one of its monumental accomplishments can be attributed to one man - Nathaniel Shilkret. For elasticity, diversity of type, innovation, intelligence in arranging and execution and sheer brilliance Nat Shilkret and the Victor Orchestra, in the area of the straight dance band, has never been approached by a considerable margin. They were the only big band that the writer can recall managing to attain and retain an exciting, rhythmic beat when called for; their waltzes were often masterpieces of flowing smoothness and advanced arrangement. The recording was frequently far superior to others of like type including Victor. Although they were not a jazz outfit, jazz and jazz soloists were tellingly employed from time to time, and the orchestra never at any time seemed to be weighed down by the sheer size of its component sections, as many big bands did then and do now. They never drowned out the music, their soloists or their listeners because, whatever the number, the orchestra was molded to the requirements of the music and the brief story it had to tell, unlike the symphony orchestra giving a William Tell version of Dardanella.

The first of the Nat Shilkret dance sides were smooth, highly danceable and expertly conceived, but do not compare in performance, recording or richness of effect with those that were to come within the next year and continue onwards and upwards to a peak of perfection that saw its apex in 1929 and early 1930.

(to be continued)

Ed. note: Any comments you may have can reach Mr. John McAndrew at 2569 Bedford Ave., Brooklyn New York.

EDISONIA
Ray Wile

HISTORY OF WHITE MASTER

The following memorandum was copied at the Edison Laboratory and filed away. It was only recently in checking through my material that I realized that it was one of the earliest accounts of disc processes that I have discovered. The London Recording Studio was shut down with the beginning of World War I in August 1914. So that the document must predate this.

Doc E 42-89-0

HISTORY OF A WHITE MASTER

Received from N. Y. by Grimes

1. Gold plated by Grimes
2. Gold plated by Dinwiddie
3. Master mold made by Grimes
4. 1st submaster print

1. This department keeps record of all tunes recorded.
2. Record of white masters made in New York and London. Order White Masters made up;
3. by giving list to Dinwiddie and Grimes for plating for entire week.
4. Receive prints from Grimes for Mr. Edison to hear. Reports to Grimes-Miller what records are passed - Held & Rejected
5. After a quantity are passed pair and assign commercial numbers (Price is made by Mr. Edison) and send list to various department heads.

6. We order disc record plates for labels on records and inspect them after receiving from advertising department and then turn over to Grimes. These plates are ordered beforehand so as to be ready. (Takes 4 to 5 days to make).
7. Keep on file one print of each white master.
8. When all white masters are used and the tune is still wanted we report to Mr. Edison recommending that it should be made over.
9. Keep record of work done by N. Y. R. office
Keep record of masters rec'd by Grimes
Keep record of molds delivered.
Keep record of Dinwiddie plating.
Keep record of Disc record plates.

(Office memorandum written on cheap yellow table paper, circa 1912-14?)

WHERE ARE THEY?
by Frank Kelly

S. C. LOU HERMANN (Gil Koerner's cousin), who played piano with Paul Specht, etc. - and was a fine 30s trainer of young orchestral pianists - currently teaches music in Tampa, Fla. public schools. Chas. "Jap" Harriss, vet trombonist with such 20s & 30s bands as Jan Garber, & other big names - is in the real estate biz in Clearwater, Fla. CHAS. AMBERGER, Guitarist with Paul Specht, etc. and fine trainer of 20s & 30s Orch. Guitarists, Banjoists, etc. currently is employed at Republic Aviation, in Farmingdale, L. I., N. Y. BILL DINAN, drummer with Lucky Strike Hit Parade radio show (pre-war), also arranger & drummer with Jerry Freeman's Paradise Restaurant Orch - nowadays is a NYC salesman. GEORGE VAN EPS, big time NYC Guitarist - still plays L. A. TV & record dates - and also operates his own L. A. hobby shop.

ONE OF THE JOHNSON BOYS (continued from page 8)

Johnny Johnson then got a contract with Cameo and made the following sides with the Pelham Heath Inn band:

c. December 3, 1923

742 C2 Ca 451 Raggedly Ann
743 C2 Ca 455 Wooley Wooley Woo
(the 2nd title issued by JOHNSON'S GOLD DRAGON ORCHESTRA - directed by Dusty Rhoades)

c. January 6, 1924

777 C2 Ca 477 Wop Blues
777 C3 Ca 2158 Wop Blues
777 C3 Muse 416 Wop Blues (by MUSICAL COMRADES)
778 A2 Ca 476 Climbing Up The Scale

c. January 12, 1924

796 D1 Ca 479 In Love With Love
797 E2 Ca 477 Stay Home, Little Girl, Stay Home
797 E2 Li 2156 Stay Home, Little Girl, Stay Home

Johnson recalls recording "Once in a Blue Moon" which along with "Raggedly Ann" and "In Love With Love" are all 1923 tunes by Jerome Kern from the show "Stepping Stones" -- the first mentioned tune has not been located.

Johnson had a chance to go to Palm Beach, Florida, and left shortly after this recording session -- he took Frank Crum, Buddy DeMarcus (sax) and McDaniel along to Palm Beach, while Dusty Rhoades went to St. Petersburg, Florida. Johnson gave Nichols a chance to organize and front his first band at Pelham Heath Inn during Johnson's absence. Red's band had: Joe Venuti (vi); Freddy Morrow (sax); Dudley Fosdick (mellophone); Gerald Finney (p); and Joe Ziegler (dm). Venuti was on his way to join Jean Goldkettle in Detroit, but Red talked Joe into playing with the band.

This band played the Inn for just 8 weeks. Although the management wasn't happy with the 45-minute intermissions, Johnson, with his regulars, returned as scheduled, just in time. By this time Nichols has had a taste of success and became more ambitious. Actually, at the end of the first week Johnson called a meeting between sets on a Sunday afternoon. He felt that some undercurrent existed in the band and he wanted to know if anyone was dissatisfied. It turned out that Nichols and Rhoades were trying to organize a band to take out to one of the dancehalls on one of the lakes in northern Indiana. So Johnson and Nichols and Rhoades agreed that in two weeks they would part company.

On April 1, 1924, the night of an 8-inch snow storm in New York, Red Nichols played his last job for Johnny Johnson.

Johnny Johnson and his orchestra, with an altered personnel, made one more session for Cameo, as follows:

c. May 12, 1924

992 D1 Ca 553 My Papa Doesn't Two-Time
No Time-vocal chorus
993 A2 Ca 557 Nothing To Do - vocal

While much misinformation has been written about these early days, we believe the information here is accurate. These data have been checked and rechecked with the very kind assistance of Johnny Johnson, Chuck Campbell, Frank Crum, Harry G. McDaniel, Dr. Fritz Morris, and Al Philburn. Help on the discographical information was supplied by Perry Armagnac and the editors of RECORD RESEARCH.

HENDERSONIA (continued from page 13)

Oct. 24, 1927 date: (144896-97-98) - 2 or 3 tp (Ladnier); 1 tb (Harrison); 3 reeds (Bailey cl; Redman or Pasquall alto; Hawkins tenor); piano; banjo.

April 6, 1928 date: (145975-76-77) - 1 or 2 tp (Stark or Stewart); 1 tb (Harrison ?); 2 saxes (Bailey cl; Hawkins tenor); piano; banjo; unknown bass sax; Marshall, drums.

HENDERSONIA

May 12, 1927 date: (144134-35-36) - 2 or 3 tp (Joe Smith, Ladnier); 1 tb (Harrison); 3 reeds (Bailey cl; Hawkins tenor); piano; banjo; tuba; Marshall, drums.

By the way, alternate takes of two Dixie Stompers titles are so far known. These are HI-DIDDLE-DIDDLE (Harmony 179-H), known with both takes #1 and #2, and JACKASS BLUES (Harmony 166-H) known with both takes #2 and #3. The differences between each pair are slight, being noticeable only in the hot solos. Charlie Green's trombone solo on JACKASS BLUES ends with a blunt on take #3, as if he suddenly turned into the recording horn.

I will be interested to hear any comments on these sessions and on the points raised above. Please write c/o my new address: P. O. Box 501, Stanhope, New Jersey.

REVISED

EUBIE BLAKE

ROLLOGRAPHY

Compiled by MICHAEL MONTGOMERY

Six additional piano rolls have been found made by Eubie Blake in 1918 and 1919, ante-dating his earliest known rolls for Melodee in January 1921. These listings were taken from original monthly supplements. To date, no known copies of these rolls have been discovered.

January 1918

Rhythmodik J 19124 Rain Song

February 1918

Rhythmodik X101103 Ev'rybody's Crazy 'Bout the Doggone Blues
Rhythmodik X101113 Somebody's Done Me Wrong

July 1919

Rhythmodik J103843 Mirandy - (played by Eubie Blake, assisted by Edwin Williams)
Rhythmodik J103933 Good Night, Angeline - (assisted by Edgar Fairchild)

August 1919

Rhythmodik J104323 Save Your Money, John (assisted by Edwin Williams)

January 1921

Melodee 4153 Broadway Blues

February 1921

Melodee 4199 Crazy Blues
Melodee 4241 Strut Miss Lizzie
Melodee S2949 Home Again Blues
Melodee S2948 It's Right Here For You

March 1921

Melodee S2966 Don't Tell Your Monkey Man
Melodee 4259 Boll Weevil Blues

April 1921

Melodee S2980 If You Don't Want Me - Blues
Melodee S2985 Wang Wang Blues
Duo Art 10091 Negro Spirituals

May 1921

Melodee 4371 Memphis Blues

September 1921

Melodee 4427 Dangerous Blues

October 1921

Republic or Melodee Gypsy Blues

November 1921

Melodee 4549 Arkansas Blues

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Coming: A revision of Tony Parenti's discography which appeared in issue 28.

THE AMERICAN MINSTREL THEATRE

(continued)

- 3554- Standard 3554
- 1-15 RAMBLER MINSTRELS - "F"
"Moses Andrew Jackson, Goodbye"
Arthur Collins
- 7705 Zonophone 871
RAMBLER MINSTRELS #5
"I Know I'll be Happy Till I Die"
Collins, Harlan, Murray, Porter.
- MNA Cameo Record (Issue Number ?)
sold in Kress's under Romeo Label
MINSTREL SHOW - PART I
"Goodbye Eliza Jane"
& MINSTREL SHOW - PART II
"Dear Old Girl"
Stanly, Murray, Campbell
- 0378-3 Marconi 0378
"Old Folks at Home"
Porter & Spencer-MINSTRELS

'This is Jazz' is a new addition to the Fletcher Henderson record library. It's modern in approach and style being recorded at Cafe Society, Down Town in 1950. Personnel: Red Allen, Dick Vance, Eddie Barefield, Lucky Thompson, John Brown, Fletcher Henderson and Jimmy Crawford.

'Black Snake Blues' is Victoria Spivey's blues-classic, recorded by Doc Evans Orch: Doc Evans, Dick Pendleton, Hal Runyon, Knocky Parker, Bill Peer, Red Maddock and George Tupper.

(To be Continued)